

THE
NATIONAL
Ballet
OF CANADA

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Ballet Notes

The 2012/13 season is dedicated to the memory
of The National Ballet of Canada's greatest patron
Walter Carsen, O.C.

Giselle

December 5 – 9, 2012

Greta Hodgkinson.
Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann.

2012/13 Souvenir Book

Featuring stunning images of National Ballet dancers by renowned photographers Aleksandar Antonijevic and Sian Richards.

On Sale Now in the Lobby!



Heather Ogden.
Photo by Aleksandar Antonijevic.

THE NATIONAL Ballet OF CANADA

Karen Kain
Artistic Director

Celia Franca, C.C., Founder

George Crum, Music Director Emeritus

Karen Kain, C.C. Artistic Director
Kevin Garland Executive Director

David Briskin Music Director and Principal Conductor
Rex Harrington, O.C. Artist-in-Residence

Magdalena Popa Principal Artistic Coach
Lindsay Fischer Artistic Director, YOU dance / Ballet Master

Peter Ottmann Senior Ballet Master
Mandy-Jayne Richardson Senior Ballet Mistress

Aleksandar Antonijevic, Guillaume Côté, Greta Hodgkinson, Jiří Jelínek, Zdenek Konvalina*, Evan McKie*, Heather Ogden, Sonia Rodriguez, Piotr Stanczyk, Jillian Vanstone, Xiao Nan Yu

Kevin D. Bowles, Lorna Geddes, Rebekah Rimsay, Tomas Schramek, Hazaros Surmeyan

Naoya Ebe, Keiichi Hirano, Tanya Howard, Stephanie Hutchison, Etienne Lavigne, Patrick Lavoie, Elena Lobsanova, McGee Maddox, Stacey Shiori Minagawa, Tina Pereira, Jonathan Renna, Robert Stephen, Brett van Sickle

Jordana Daumec, Alexandra MacDonald, Chelsy Meiss, Alejandra Perez-Gomez, Jenna Savella, Christopher Stalzer

James Applewhite, Jack Bertinshaw, Skylar Campbell, Adjí Cissoko, Jonathan Davidsson, Shaila D'Onofrio, Krista Dowson, Nadine Drouin, Jackson Dwyer, Francesco Gabriele Frola, Giorgio Galli, Selene Guerrero-Trujillo, Emma Hawes, Juri Hiraoka, Ji Min Hong, Kathryn Hosier, Rui Huang, Lise-Marie Jourdain, Larissa Khotchenkova, James Leja, Elizabeth Marrable, Shino Mori, Tiffany Mosher, Andreea Oltéanu, Asiel Rivero, Brendan Saye, Joseph Steinauer, Dylan Tedaldi, Nan Wang, Aarik Wells, Sarah Elena Wolff

RBC Apprentice Programme / YOU dance:
Jonathan Batista, Trygve Cumpston, Hannah Fischer, Miyoko Koyasu, Nayara Lopes, Liana Macera, Tudor Moldoveanu, Felix Paquet, Meghan Pugh, Kota Sato

Lorna Geddes Pointe Shoe Manager / Assistant Ballet Mistress
Joysanne Sidimus Guest Balanchine Répétiteur

Ernest Abugov Stage Managers
Jeff Morris
Peter Sherk Stage Manager, YOU dance

*Guest Artist

Orchestra

Violin 1
Naha Greenholtz, *Acting Concertmaster*
Lynn Kuo, *Assistant Concertmaster*
James Aylesworth
Jennie Baccante
Sheldon Grabke*
Nancy Kershaw
Sonia Klimasko-Leheniuk
Yakov Lerner
Jayne Maddison
Wendy Rogers
Paul Zevenhuizen

Violin 2
Dominique Laplante, *Principal Second Violin*
Csaba Koczó, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Xiao Grabke
Renee London*
Ron Mah
Aya Miyagawa
Filip Tomov
Joanna Zabrowarna

Violas
Angela Rudden, *Principal*
Theresa Rudolph Koczó, *Assistant Principal**
Carolyn Blackwell*, *Acting Assistant Principal*
Valerie Kuinka
Johann Lotter
Beverley Spotton
Larry Toman

Cellos
Maurizio Baccante, *Principal*
Marianne Pack
Olga Laktionova
Andrew McIntosh
Elaine Thompson
Paul Widner

Basses
Hans J.F. Preuss, *Principal*
Tom Hazlitt*
Paul Langley*
Robert Speer
Cary Takagaki

Flutes
Leslie J. Alt, *Principal*
Maria Pelletier
Shelley Brown*, *Piccolo*
Kevin O'Donnell†, *Piccolo*

Oboes
Mark Rogers, *Principal*
Karen Rotenberg
Lesley Young, *English Horn*

Clarinets
Max Christie, *Principal*
Colleen Cook*
Gary Kidd, *Bass Clarinet*
Emily Marlow*

Bassoons
Stephen Mosher, *Principal*
Jerry Robinson
Elizabeth Gowen, *Contra Bassoon*

Horns
Gary Pattison, *Principal*
Vincent Barbee*
Derek Conrod
Diane Doig*
Christine Passmore*
Scott Wevers

Trumpets
Richard Sandals, *Principal*
Mark Dharmaratnam
Robert Weymouth

Trombones
David Archer, *Principal*
Robert Ferguson
David Pell, *Bass Trombone*

Tuba
Sasha Johnson, *Principal*

Harp
Lucie Parent, *Principal*

Timpany
Michael Perry, *Principal*

Percussion
Mark Mazur, *Acting Principal*
Kristofer Maddigan

Orchestra Personnel Manager and Music Administrator
Raymond Tizzard

Librarian
Lucie Parent

Assistant to the Music Director
Jean Verch

* On Leave of Absence
† Additional Musician



Wednesday December 5 at 7:30 pm
Thursday, December 6 at 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm
Friday, December 7 at 7:30 pm
Saturday, December 8 at 2:00 pm and 7:30 pm
Sunday, December 9 at 2:00 pm

Conductor:
David Briskin, Music Director and Principal Conductor

Giselle

Choreography and Production: **Peter Wright** after the choreography of **Jean Coralli**, **Jules Perrot** and **Marius Petipa** (Based on the book by **Vernoy de Saint-Georges**, **Gautier** and **Coralli**)

Music: **Adolphe Adam**, revised by **Joseph Horowitz**

Set and Costume Design: **Desmond Heeley**

Lighting Design: **Gil Wechsler**

Giselle was produced as a memorial to the late William P. Walker and was made possible through the courtesy of many generous friends of the National Ballet.

World premiere: Paris Opéra Ballet, Paris, France, June 28, 1841

The National Ballet of Canada Premiere: April 16, 1970

Greta Hodgkinson with Artists of the Ballet.

Photo by **Cylla von Tiedemann.**



The Cast

Act I

Albrecht, Count of Silesia, disguised as Loys, a Villager

Guillaume Côté (Dec 5, 8 eve)
Naoya Ebe* (Dec 6 mat)
Zdenek Konvalina* (Dec 6 eve, 8 mat)
Evan McKie* (Dec 7, 9)

Wilfred, his squire

James Leja (Dec 5, 6 eve, 8)
Brett van Sickle (Dec 6 mat, 7, 9)

Berthe, Giselle's mother

Lorna Geddes (Dec 5, 7, 8 eve, 9)
Rebekah Rimsay (Dec 6, 8 mat)

Hilarion, a forester

Piotr Stanczyk (Dec 5, 8 eve)
Etienne Lavigne (Dec 6 mat)
Jonathan Renna (Dec 6 eve, 8 mat)
Jiří Jelinek (Dec 7, 9)

Giselle, a peasant girl

Greta Hodgkinson (Dec 5, 8 eve)
Jillian Vanstone (Dec 6 mat)
Sonia Rodriguez (Dec 6 eve, 8 mat)
Xiao Nan Yu (Dec 7, 9)

Giselle's friends

Elena Lobsanova, Chelsy Meiss,
Keiichi Hirano, Patrick Lavoie (Dec 5, 8 eve)
Jenna Savella, Tina Pereira, Dylan Tedaldi,
Skylar Campbell (Dec 6 mat, 7, 9)
Selene Guerrero-Trujillo, Stacey Shiori
Minagawa, Francesco Gabriele Frola,
Christopher Stalzer (Dec 6 eve, 8 mat)

Bathilde, Albrecht's fiancée

Alejandra Perez-Gomez (Dec 5, 8 eve, 9)
Stephanie Hutchison (Dec 6 mat, 7)
Sarah Elena Wolff (Dec 6 eve, 8 mat)

Albrecht's father, Duke of Silesia

Kevin D. Bowles (Dec 5, 6 eve, 8)
Jonathan Renna (Dec 6 mat, 7, 9)

A Nobleman

Aarik Wells

Villagers, Pages and Courtiers

Artists of the Ballet

Intermission

Act II

Myrtha, Queen of the Wilis

Heather Ogden (Dec 5, 7, 8 eve)
Juri Hiraoka (Dec 6 mat, 8 mat)
Stephanie Hutchison (Dec 6 eve, 9)

Her Attendants, Moyna and Zulme

Jenna Savella, Jordana Daumec (Dec 5,
6 mat, 8)
Alexandra MacDonald,
Alejandra Perez-Gomez (Dec 6 eve, 7, 9)

Wilis

Artists of the Ballet

Running Time

ACT I – 51 minutes
Intermission – 20 minutes
ACT II – 47 minutes

The performance will run approximately 1 hour
58 minutes.

+ Guest Artist

* Debut

Evan McKie's appearance is made possible
by a generous donation from The Frank Gerstein
Charitable Foundation.

All casting is subject to change.

Giselles



Greta Hodgkinson



Jillian Vanstone

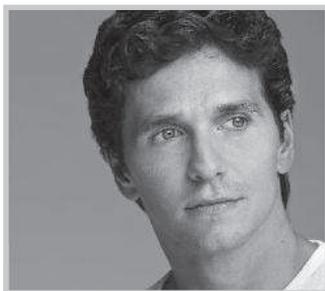


Sonia Rodriguez



Xiao Nan Yu

Albrechts



Guillaume Côté



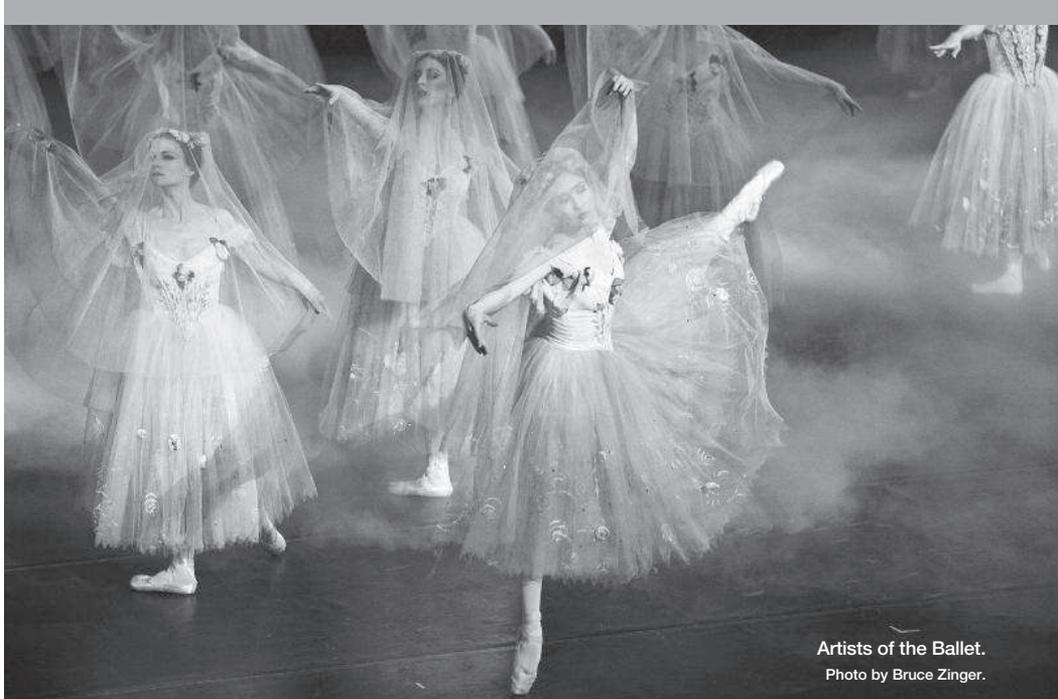
Naoya Ebe



Zdenek Konvalina



Evan McKie



Artists of the Ballet.

Photo by Bruce Zinger.

Synopsis

Act I

The first act is set in a Rhineland valley surrounded by vine-clad hills in medieval Germany. A majestic castle looms in the distance over the valley. It is autumn and the peasants are enjoying a rich harvest. Among the many happy festivities is the crowning of the Queen of the Vintage.

Giselle is a young peasant girl who lives with her mother, Berthe. Their cottage is opposite one that has recently been occupied by the handsome but mysterious Loys, a peasant farmer. Loys is really Count Albrecht of Silesia, who has disguised himself as a peasant in order to win Giselle's affections. Giselle has fallen in love with Loys, but the local forester Hilarion loves Giselle and has always planned to marry her. Hilarion is suspicious of Loys and thinks he is hiding some secret.

Challenging Loys to a fight, Hilarion notices that Loys immediately clasps his right hand to his left hip, as if he were about to draw a sword. The astute Hilarion notes that such

an action would be the instinctive reaction of a nobleman. Hilarion tries to warn Giselle that there is something suspicious about Loys but she refuses to believe him.

Soon a royal hunting party appears in the village, led by Albrecht's father, the Duke of Silesia, and Countess Bathilde, who is engaged to Albrecht. The village welcomes the noble visitors and Giselle presents flowers to the beautiful Bathilde. When it is revealed that Giselle is engaged to be married, Bathilde gives Giselle a necklace as a gift. While Bathilde and the Duke go to rest in Giselle's cottage, Hilarion breaks into Loys' cottage and discovers his sword, which bears the family crest of the Duke of Silesia. He now has proof of Loys' true identity.

During the festivities that follow, when Giselle is crowned Queen of the Vintage, Hilarion challenges Loys and, summoning the royal party, reveals Loys' true identity. Everyone is shocked and confused as they realize that Loys is really Count Albrecht. Bathilde is shocked to see her fiancé dressed

as a peasant. She then tells everyone that she is herself engaged to be married to the duplicitous Albrecht.

When Giselle realizes that Albrecht has deceived her, she is overcome by grief and quickly loses her reason. Giselle recalls her moments of innocent happiness with Albrecht, but then, in a frenzy of madness, she thrusts Albrecht's sword toward her heart and dies in her mother's arms. Albrecht runs off, filled with guilt and despair for what he has done. Hilarion and the village grieve for Giselle.

Act II

The scene opens in a moonlit forest glade near the grave where Giselle has been buried. Since she took her own life, Giselle has been laid to rest in unhallowed ground, unprotected from evil spirits. It is midnight and Hilarion is keeping vigil, but when the forest becomes

haunted by Wilis (pronounced will-eez) he flees in terror. The Wilis are the spirits of betrothed young women who have died from grief after being betrayed by faithless lovers. Malicious in nature, these ghostly, nocturnal creatures are ruled by their queen, Myrtha, and seek revenge by forcing any man who crosses their path between midnight and dawn to dance to his death. The Wilis are gathering this night to prepare for the initiation of Giselle into their ranks.

The Wilis momentarily leave the scene, and the melancholic Albrecht arrives at Giselle's grave to plead for forgiveness. To his amazement, the ghost of the dead Giselle appears before him and he follows her into the forest. Hilarion returns to Giselle's grave, this time to be entrapped by the Wilis, who show him no mercy. After forcing him to dance until he is exhausted, Myrtha commands the



Xiao Nan Yu and Guillaume Côté.

Photo by David Cooper.

Willis to fling Hilarion into the nearby lake. When Albrecht returns, the Willis surround him and try to doom him to the same fate as Hilarion. Giselle attempts to save Albrecht, warning him that he will be able to withstand the Willis if he takes shelter by the cross on her grave, which he does.

To have her revenge, the Queen of the Willis forces Albrecht and Giselle to dance on and on into the night, until they are extremely exhausted. Albrecht collapses. Knowing that the power of the Willis is destroyed by daylight, Giselle manages to sustain Albrecht until the chimes of a distant church bell announce the arrival of dawn.

The Willis vanish and Giselle must return to her grave. But as her love has transcended death, her spirit has now been freed from the power of the Willis. As the curtain falls, Albrecht, forlorn and reflective, is left alone in his sorrow.



Xiao Nan Yu with Artists of the Ballet.
Photo by David Cooper.

The Roles of Giselle and Albrecht

The longevity of *Giselle* is credited not only to its historical value but also to the universality of its tale – a story of love, class distinction, betrayal, remorse and forgiveness. Like *Romeo and Juliet*, *Giselle* is a story of lovers separated by the artificial barriers of society. For both dancers and audience members, the roles of Giselle and Albrecht prove a fascinating challenge, as they allow for multi-faceted psychological character development.

The role of Giselle is unique, from its costuming to the complexity of its character makeup. At the time of its creation in 1841, *Giselle* was one of the first ballets to introduce the female dancer in pointe shoes, a device that allowed her wider possibilities of movement. The result was that she seemed light, ethereal and otherworldly on stage. The introduction of calf-length, lightweight tulle dresses with tight bodices also allowed for greater freedom in leg movements and the appearance of softer, “romantic” arms.

The contrasting thematic concerns of *Giselle* also lent themselves to the Romantic fervour of the period. While many ballets dealt either with an idealized peasant life or the fantastic, *Giselle* incorporated both. The ballet is set in two locales, which are set off in sharp contrast. Act I takes place in the peasant village, which is contrasted with the moonlit forest glade of Act II. As well, the realism of Act I is contrasted with the fantasy elements of Act II. The first act incorporates bright and lively mime and musical leitmotifs that develop the drama. Before the end of Act I, Giselle’s mad scene begins the transition to Act II, in which the demonic world of the Willis is represented as dark, sombre and melancholic.

The character of Giselle also goes through a transformation, from light-hearted peasant girl to crazed woman and, finally, to a ghostly vision. Giselle is a challenge for ballerinas who must combine dramatic ability and

technical brilliance to bring about a convincing performance in a role that is both physically and mentally exhausting.

One of the most powerful scenes in the ballet is Giselle's death. Does she die of madness or of a broken heart? Or does she commit suicide when she thrusts Albrecht's sword toward her heart? Since early documentation proves inconclusive on the subject, the scene has been dealt with in various ways by. The only clear fact is that Giselle is not buried in a graveyard but in the depths of a forest in unhallowed ground. Only a suicide would warrant such a burial. Choreographer Peter Wright has said he believes Giselle kills herself, but in his own productions dancers have changed the scene to suit their own interpretations. In the late 1800s in Russia, during Marius Petipa's tenure as ballet master of the Imperial Theatre, suicide was not accepted on the stage, so Giselle invariably was shown as dying from madness.

The role of Albrecht provides male dancers with one of ballet's most interesting and complex characters. Far removed from the porteurs of most classical works, who simply carry the ballerina, Albrecht is a fully rounded character capable of standing on his own and holding centre stage.

There is no right or wrong way to portray Albrecht. Because Albrecht is a nobleman in disguise, it might be assumed that he wishes to be freed from his elevated social position. It is also possible that he has grown alienated from his wealth and is seeking a more spiritual, simple and authentic existence. Or maybe he is a restless dreamer who seeks a quaint diversion among the peasants.

In falling in love with Giselle is Albrecht a cad? Is he a thoughtless nobleman and idle flirt? Or is he truly in love with Giselle but simply naive about the social implications of their liaison? Whether or not he is concerned with the consequences of his actions, he is soon confronted with them.

Already engaged to be married, Albrecht is prevented by his duty to his aristocratic family from fulfilling his love for Giselle. Giselle's

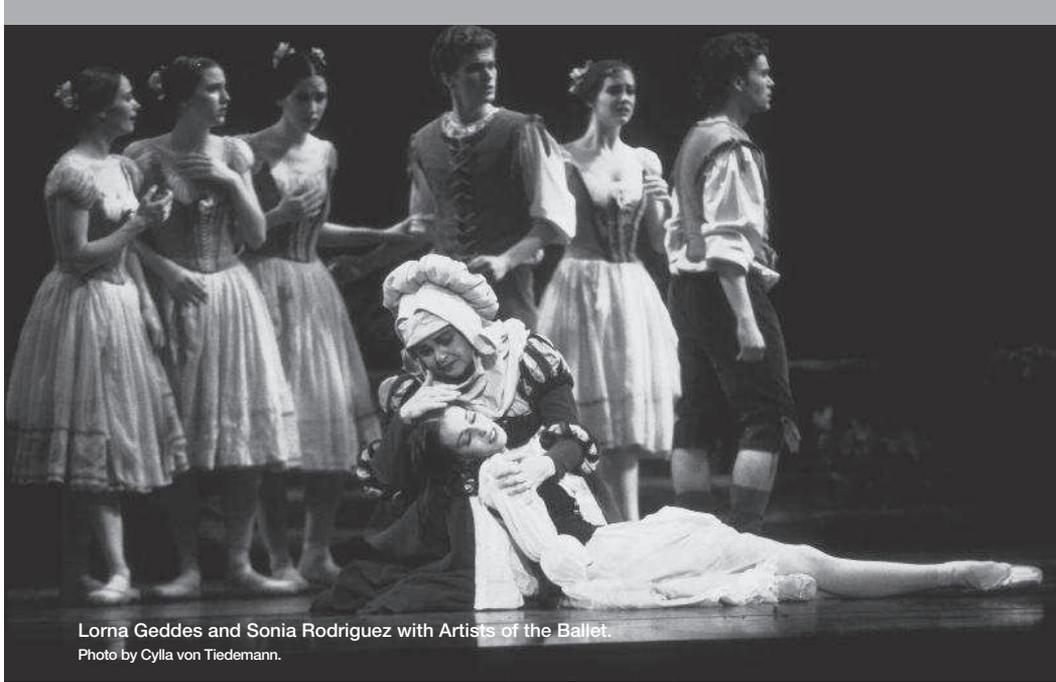


Greta Hodgkinson.

Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann.

madness and subsequent death not only awaken Albrecht's moral sense, but also bring to the fore his emotions, primarily love and guilt. Through Giselle's love and forgiveness in Act II, Albrecht gains new awareness, humility, and a sense of responsibility. He is also made aware of the gulf between reality and his ideals, and his inability to merge the two. He must fight for his life in this act, at the mercy of the powerful Wilis, who attempt with their supernatural powers to compel him to dance to his death.

At the end of the ballet, Albrecht is left on stage, a solitary figure. Dancers' interpretations vary in these final moments, sometimes walking into the distance, away from the audience or toward it; sometimes carrying a flower, the only tangible link with Giselle, at other times, allowing the flower to fall to the ground; others end the ballet reaching out for the elusive dream or kneeling in remorse. In the original production, this scene was taken one step further, with Bathilde, Albrecht's betrothed, returning to his side. The audience would have concluded that although he had savoured his ideal (Giselle), he was reconciled to return to reality.



Lorna Geddes and Sonia Rodríguez with Artists of the Ballet.

Photo by Cylla von Tiedemann.

Leitmotifs in Giselle

A leitmotif is a theme used recurrently to denote a specific person, object or feeling, either through music or movement. *Giselle* composer Adolphe Adam ingeniously used musical leitmotifs in his score. Adam's leitmotifs were complemented by dance movement leitmotifs created by choreographers Jules Perrot and Jean Coralli, and are still incorporated in the ballet today, more than 150 years after its premiere.

Giselle's theme

There is one sequence of steps with accompanying music that Giselle repeats at various key moments in the drama. This series of ballonnes, piqués and pas de basque denotes Giselle's love for dance. They are very simple steps, light and airy, that reflect Giselle's simple peasant background and carefree existence. When Bathilde asks Giselle what her favourite pastime is, Giselle executes this series of steps, telling Bathilde that she loves to dance.

Flower theme

The flower theme in which Giselle plucks the petals of a daisy ("he loves me, he loves me not") is performed twice, once in a happy duet with Albrecht, and again in the mad scene, as Giselle recalls her lover.

Huntsmen's theme

The huntsmen's theme is the sound of horns that always precedes the arrival of the nobles and their hunting party.

Wili theme

The Wili theme is first heard in Act I when Berthe, Giselle's mother, warns her about dancing too much; it acts as a premonition of the tragedy that is to follow. The theme is reintroduced in the second act with the arrival of the Wilis, who surround Hilarion on his visit to Giselle's grave.

Hilarion's theme

Hilarion's entrance is heralded by his own distinct musical theme. For this music, Adolphe Adam used an excerpt from the Fate theme of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*.

Selected Biographies

Karen Kain, C.C., LL.D, D. Litt., O.Ont.

Artistic Director

Long recognized as one of the most gifted classical dancers of her era, noted for her compelling characterizations and versatility as a performer, Artistic Director Karen Kain is one of Canada's most renowned and committed advocates for the arts. Born in Hamilton, Ontario, Ms. Kain received her training at Canada's National Ballet School in Toronto, joining The National Ballet of Canada in 1969. She was quickly promoted to Principal Dancer with the company after her sensational debut as the Swan Queen in *Swan Lake*. In 1971, Ms. Kain was awarded the Silver Medal in the Women's Category at the prestigious International Ballet Competition in Moscow and, along with her frequent partner at the time, Frank Augustyn, received a special prize for Best Pas de Deux. Subsequently, she embarked on a remarkable international career during which she performed many of ballet's greatest roles with such companies as Paris Opéra Ballet, Roland Petit's Le Ballet de Marseilles, the Bolshoi Ballet, London Festival Ballet and Vienna State Opera Ballet. Throughout her career she also developed a close creative partnership with Rudolf Nureyev and often performed with him. A favourite of some of the world's most prominent choreographers, she premiered many new and important works during her time as a dancer. Ms. Kain retired from dancing following a farewell tour in 1997 and

took up the position of Artist-in-Residence with the National Ballet, a role that was later expanded to that of Artistic Associate. In 2004, she restaged Rudolf Nureyev's landmark version of *The Sleeping Beauty* for the company and the following year was named Artistic Director. Ms. Kain has received many Canadian and international awards throughout her career, testifying to her accomplishments both as an artist and an advocate for the arts. She is a Companion of the Order of Canada, the first Canadian recipient of the Cartier Lifetime Achievement Award and was named an Officer of the Order of Arts and Letters by the Government of France. In 1997, Ms. Kain was honoured with a Governor General's National Arts Centre Award and received a Governor General's Award for Lifetime Artistic Achievement in 2002. From 2004 to 2008, she was Chair of the Canada Council for the Arts. In 2007, she was presented with the Barbara Hamilton Memorial Award for demonstrating excellence and professionalism in the performing arts. In 2008, the Karen Kain School for the Arts officially opened, a tribute to Ms. Kain's ongoing contributions to the cultural life of her country, and in 2011, Ms. Kain was honoured by the International Society for the Performing Arts with the Distinguished Artist Award.

Sir Peter Wright, CBE Choreographer

Sir Peter Wright made his debut as a professional dancer with the Ballets Jooss during World War II and in the 1950s, appeared with several

dance companies, including Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. In 1959, he was appointed Ballet Master to Sadler's Wells Opera and Teacher at The Royal Ballet School. Two years later he went to Stuttgart as Teacher and Ballet Master of the company being formed by John Cranko. There he choreographed several works, including *The Mirror Walkers* and *Quintet*, and mounted his first production of *Giselle*. His other interpretations of the classics include *The Sleeping Beauty*, *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker* and *Coppélia*. In 1969, he returned to The Royal Ballet as Sir Kenneth MacMillan's Associate Director. In 1977, he was appointed Director of Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, taking the company to Birmingham in 1990 when it became Birmingham Royal Ballet. During his career, Sir Peter Wright has won many awards. He was made a Commander of the British Empire in 1985, was knighted in 1993 and gained the title of Director Laureate of Birmingham Royal Ballet in 1995.

Aldophe Adam Composer

Adolphe Adam was born in Paris, the son of a music professor at the Conservatoire. He began musical studies at boarding school and entered the Conservatoire in 1821, studying organ and harmonium, with the goal of becoming a composer for the theatre. By age 20 he was writing songs for Parisian vaudeville houses. By 1830, Mr. Adam had completed 28 theatre works including some dances. His first dramatic composition was a one act operetta,

Pierre et Catherine, which premiered to great success at the Opera Comique in 1829. Mr. Adam's first solo ballet composition was *Faust* in 1833 for choreographer André Deshayes. He continued to compose and in 1841 wrote the music for *Giselle*, which premiered at the Paris Opéra on June 28, 1841. After a following out with the Director of the Paris Opéra, Mr. Adam invested his own money to open a third opera house, the Théâtre National as a showcase for young composers. The theatre was not a success and left Adam with many debts. He turned to journalism to help pay his bills and was eventually appointed Professor of Composition at the Conservatoire, a position he held until his death. When he died, Mr. Adam had written 40 operas, 14 ballets and numerous light operas and vaudevilles.

Desmond Heeley
Set and Costume Designer
Desmond Heeley's set and costume designs have been seen on the stages of the world's major opera, ballet and theatre companies during an international career that has spanned more than 50 years. He began his career in 1948 with an apprenticeship at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. In 1952, he embarked on a freelance career in London and came to Canada in 1957 to design *Hamlet* for the Stratford Festival, beginning an association that continues to this day. His 1968 designs for Tom Stoppard's Broadway production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* won him two Tony Awards.

This honour, for both set and costume design in a single production, is unsurpassed. His creations for the National Ballet include the *Sylvia pas de deux*, *Oiseaux Exotiques*, *Don Quixote*, *The Merry Widow*, Erik Bruhn's *Swan Lake* and Sir Peter Wright's *Giselle*. Mr. Heeley's work is in museums and private collections across Canada, the US and UK. A former Professor of Design at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University, he continues to teach and lecture extensively. He has won numerous awards including the prestigious Irene Sharaff Lifetime Achievement Award in 1994. In 2005, Mr. Heeley received an honorary doctorate from the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Gil Wechsler
Lighting Designer
Gil Wechsler became the Metropolitan Opera's first full-time Resident Lighting Designer in 1976. Throughout his 20-year tenure, he designed the lighting for more than 100 opera productions. His responsibilities also included the lighting of more than 60 televised opera performances and tours throughout the US and Japan. Preceding his appointment to the Metropolitan Opera, Mr. Wechsler designed more than 30 productions for Lyric Opera of Chicago. He has also designed more than 60 productions for Stratford Shakespeare Festival, including *Equus* in 1997 and *Macbeth* in 2004. Mr. Wechsler's designs for ballet are in the repertoires of American Ballet Theatre, The Royal Ballet, The Harkness Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, Canada's Royal Winnipeg

Ballet, the Berlin Opera Ballet and The National Ballet of Canada. He has also lit productions for Paris Opéra, San Francisco Opera, Teatro Colón and The Sante Fe Opera, as well as multiple works on Broadway. Mr. Wechsler has a fine arts degree from Yale University's School of Drama.

David Briskin
Music Director and Principal Conductor
One of the foremost ballet conductors at work today, David Briskin is renowned for the scope of his repertoire and the depth and beauty of his interpretations. Whether in the classical or contemporary idiom, from works steeped in tradition to cutting edge modern compositions, Mr. Briskin brings a sure hand and a sensitive understanding to the dramatic and choreographic life of the music he conducts. Before joining The National Ballet of Canada in 2006, Mr. Briskin served as conductor with American Ballet Theatre in New York City for seven years, directing performances at the Metropolitan Opera House, City Center and numerous ballet and opera houses around the world. In demand as a guest conductor, Mr. Briskin has worked most recently with such companies as New York City Ballet and San Francisco Ballet. Later this season, he will make his debut at Covent Garden in London conducting The Royal Ballet. He has appears with The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, Houston Ballet, Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal and Alberta Ballet, among others. For three seasons, Mr. Briskin served as Music Director of Pittsburgh

Ballet Theatre and was Conductor for The Juilliard School's Dance Division from 1993 to 2005. In 2008, Mr. Briskin was appointed Assistant Professor and Director of Orchestral Studies at the University of Toronto Faculty of Music. Mr. Briskin's versatility has also seen him conduct symphony and opera productions throughout the Americas, Europe and Asia, with such orchestras as the Pittsburgh, Detroit, Baltimore, Indianapolis and Windsor Symphony Orchestras, the Shanghai Symphony Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra of Costa Rica, and with such opera companies as Calgary Opera, Manitoba Opera, Opera Carolina, Lake George Opera and Sarasota Opera. In addition, he served for six years as Music Director of the Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra in New York. Mr. Briskin attended the prestigious Indiana University School of Music and received a Bachelor of Music Degree in Orchestral conducting from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a Master's Degree from Queens College, City University of New York.

Ernest Abugov **Stage Manager**

Ernest (Ernie) Abugov has served as Stage Manager of The National Ballet of Canada since 1973, working with every Artistic Director in the company's history from Celia Franca to Karen Kain. He has traveled with the company all over the world touring to Israel, Asia, Europe, Mexico and throughout North America. Mr. Abugov has worked with many of the world's most renowned choreographers who have created original

works for the National Ballet including Alexei Ratmansky, John Neumeier, William Forsythe and Glen Tetley. Mr. Abugov was born in Montréal, Québec. Before beginning his long association with the National Ballet, he worked with Les Feux Follets, The Charlottetown Festival, La Poudriere Theatre and The Studio Lab Theatre. He worked at Expo '67 in Montréal, stage managing over 4000 puppet shows. Mr. Abugov also toured with Harry Belafonte. In what little spare time that he has, Mr. Abugov guest-lectures to theatre students.

Jeff Morris **Stage Manager**

Born in Toronto, Jeff Morris studied technical theatre production and administration at Ryerson's Theatre School. After leaving Ryerson, he became Production Stage Manager for Toronto Dance Theatre (1990 – 1995). With Toronto Dance Theatre he toured extensively, stage managing the company's debuts in Berlin, Warsaw, Beijing, Tokyo and at the Joyce Theater, New York City. He was Production Stage Manager for *Dancers For Life* (AIDS Committee of Toronto, 1991 – 1997), Stage Manager for Theatre Passe-Muraille (*Never Swim Alone*, *Metamorphosis of a Shadow*) and for the Fringe Festival of Independent Dance Artists. Mr. Morris joined The National Ballet of Canada in 1995 and has since stage-managed a wide range of the company's unique classical and contemporary repertoire, including the world premieres of James Kudelka's *The Four Seasons*, *Cinderella*, and *An Italian Straw Hat*, Jean-Pierre Perreault's *The Comforts of*

Solitude, Alexei Ratmansky's *Romeo and Juliet*, Aszure Barton's *Watch her* and Jorma Elo's *Pur ti Miro*, Matijash Mrozewski's *Monument* and *Wolf's Court* as well as works by John Cranko, William Forsythe, George Balanchine, Sir Frederick Ashton, John Neumeier and Jerome Robbins.

The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra

The National Ballet of Canada is privileged to have its own full orchestra with over 60 members. The orchestra has performed in each of the National Ballet's seasons and is led by Music Director and Principal Conductor David Briskin. The company's first Music Director was George Crum who, along with Founder Celia Franca, was a pioneer of the company. Mr. Crum held the position from the company's inception in 1951 to 1984, when he was appointed Music Director Emeritus. The orchestra was led by Ermanno Florio from 1985 to 1990. Ormsby Wilkins was Music Director and Principal Conductor from 1990 to 2006. The National Ballet of Canada Orchestra has toured extensively with the company through Canada, the USA and Europe. Over the years, the orchestra has received much acclaim from audiences and critics alike and has recorded two CDs of Michael Torke's compositions for *The Contract (The Pied Piper)* and *An Italian Straw Hat*. The orchestra made their concert debut at Koerner Hall on April 3, 2012, in celebration of the company's 60th anniversary.

For more information, visit
national.ballet.ca